The Vacant House of Salamone

By Anna Moorhead and Angel Spanos

In the beach town of Salamone, South Carolina, a car pulled up to the vacant house across from the Jeffersons’s house on Emerald Street. Looking out the window, Mrs. Jane Jefferson sighed as the realtor put yet another For Sale sign in the yard.

“Not again!” She said, shaking her head. To her husband across the room, she exclaimed, “That house is for sale again, and just three weeks after the last person bought it! I swear— it must be haunted!” Mr. Jefferson didn’t reply, for he was snoring in his chair.

A week later, twenty-three year old Charlotte, who was very fashionable and had a thing for red shoes, moved into the house from cross-country. Mrs. Jefferson left her husband asleep (again) and bustled across the street to welcome her new neighbor. Ringing the doorbell, she was startled as a large shape launched itself through the screen door and onto her.

“Nose!” Shrieked Charlotte. “Not again!” She ran to the door. “I’m so sorry,” she apologized. “He loves new people! And he has a good sniffer—that’s why he’s called Nose…but maybe I should rename him Digger! He’s already ruined the backyard!” Mrs. Jefferson laughed and introduced herself. Charlotte was happy to meet a neighbor, and informed her that she liked to be called Charlie. After a short visit, Jane grew very serious.

“Sweetheart, do be careful. This house has been sold many times since it was built. Always, out-of-town people move in here, and not a month later, they’re gone! I don’t understand it, that’s for certain, but keep a watch out.”

Charlie laughed and assured her that she wasn’t a superstitious person, and of course, she had Nose! Mrs. Jefferson looked at the Newfoundland puppy lying on her lap and agreed. Waving goodbye, she left the house.

Nose raised his head, and bounded through the back screen door into the backyard. He promptly started to dig, and Charlie sighed. Days went by, and Nose kept bringing in bones! Charlie put them all in the back closet, and lectured him day after day: “Stop jumping the fence to get rawhides! If you want some so bad, we’ll just go buy some for you!”

He got a brand-new jumbo pack, but that didn’t stop him…until one day, Nose brought in a very rounded bone. It rolled over to Charlie, and stopped against her bright red pumps. She glanced down, and then screamed. Nose had brought in a human skull! Charlotte grabbed one of his unused rawhides, and then ran to the closet. Comparing the rawhide to one of the bones Nose had brought in, she noticed that they were not the same…and the real bone looked more like a human leg bone! Her eyes grew round. Then she saw the Newfoundland puppy in the backyard next to his largest hole. She ran out to him, her red heels getting stuck in the mud. Looking down into the hole, she saw that Nose had uncovered two entire human skeletons!

Hearing the doorbell ring, she hurried inside, tossing the skull into the closet until she could call the police. Opening the door, Nose growled. Daniel, Charlie’s realtor, stepped in. For some reason, the puppy hated the man, which was extremely odd, because he loved everyone he met! She levered the bristling dog into the closet with the bones, and went back to the door.

“Hi!” She said. “Sorry about that…”

Daniel glanced around nervously, and then said, “It’s fine. Just checking up on you…how do you like the house? Do you think you’ll want to stay here?”

Charlie responded, “Yeah! I love this place! I think that this town’ll be a really good tourist attraction…lots of people will want to come here soon!”

Daniel narrowed his eyes. Seeing the large hole in the backyard, he said urgently, “Who made that?”

“Nose did…” Charlie said. About to tell him about the bones, she saw that Daniel looked very upset. She changed her mind. “I haven’t had time to go back there. I’m too busy setting up the house.”

“I’ll go fill it in for you!” He exclaimed. He ran to the garage, got a shovel, and hurried into the backyard. When he popped back in to say he was leaving,   
Charlotte told him the truth.

“Did you notice anything in the hole?” She asked.

As he replied, “No, I didn’t,” she grabbed the phone off the counter, only to realize that there was no dial tone. She went for her cell phone, but he snatched it off the couch and put it in his pocket.

Daniel snarled. “I cut the phone lines. All of you idiot tourists. Coming in, making this just some stupid beach town. We don’t want you here!”

“Okay,” Said Charlotte, trying to remain calm. This man was obviously “off his rocker”, as Mrs. Jane Jefferson would say. Daniel grabbed the shovel and ran at her. The last thing Charlotte remembered was a heavy blow on her head.

Waking up, she found that she was lying on her bed. The deranged realtor was nowhere to be seen, but Nose was trying to chew off the ropes around her wrists. Hearing footsteps, the puppy dove under the bed, and Charlotte closed her eyes and went limp, pretending to still be knocked out. Daniel walked in, checked to make sure she was not awake, and left.

“Nose!” Charlie whispered. “You can come out from under the bed.” Wait! Under the bed! Quickly, she snapped the makeshift handcuffs off, and reached under the bed. Beside the trembling puppy was her shotgun. She took it and crept down the stairs. She was almost at the front door, and then it would just be a short run to the neighbor’s to call the police.

Then, Daniel came out of the kitchen. He froze when he saw her, and then Charlie aimed the shotgun at his head. The realtor whipped out a gun of his own and demanded that she put hers down. A shot went off, and there was a sigh of relief.

The next day, Nose was running around the backyard. Sniffing, he started to dig. Soon, he had quite a large hole. Pulling out a red pump, the puppy whined, picked it up in his mouth, and jumped the fence, running off.